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that the Puritan faith was not hostile to art but was naturally poetical, excepting for the restriction it placed upon the creative faculty, Zumbini analyzes the ideas, the action and the characters in these works of Bunyan and Milton, and traces beauties and faults to their causes in the Puritan conception of life. The most masterly part is the analysis of the character of Satan, the fiend with tender and noble elements, the hero, the orator, the "Farinata sopranaturale." His qualities are educed from the writings of the Fathers, he is set in the midst of all the poetry of passion and tragedy, he is shown to have been essentially human even to the Puritans. A short quotation from this study will illustrate the author's manner and recommend his book more than many praises. Having called attention to the discrepancy between Satan in action and Satan as described by Milton, he writes:

"Why does he derive greater advantage from the first condition than from the second? The reason is that the Puritan idea was present to the poet less strongly in the one case than in the other. When describing, Milton thought of the effect of the work itself upon the hearts of men and wished that it should help to make them abhor in Satan the origin of all evil, severed from all possibility of good elements. But placing him in action he unconsciously sank his ideas in his creation and, besides making him more heroic, took from him of the supernatural what he added to him of the human."

LEWIS F. MOTT.

*The College of the City of New York.*

### MEDIAEVAL LITERATURE.

*Studies in Mediaeval Life and Literature* by EDWARD TOMPKINS McLAUGHLIN. Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in Yale University. New York and London: 1894. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 8vo. xi+188 pp.

THE author follows out two purposes in these *Studies*; first to present to us pictures of the Middle Ages as they were, and then to trace the thread of human unity running through them. Primarily, though, these essays are a study of man, with his foibles and virtues, his sentiments and passions, his hopes and his fears. It is no defence, no glorification, no dazzling picture, and likewise no gloomy

sketch in sombre colors of those times of which, as the author rightly says:

"The usual conception seems to consist of a few facts and theories about the feudal system and the crusades, the names with possibly some traits of a few eminent public figures and a general impression of confusion and obscurity . . . sunshine and twilight on either hand and in the background an impenetrable mist concealing the great masses of humanity as well as all concrete actual lives of all the great."

No fair-minded reader will deny that Professor McLaughlin has accomplished his object and has produced a work of interest to the general reader as also to the special student. For the latter it has an additional scientific value, as it contains an untold amount of careful research and study, of thorough learning and clear, penetrating literary discrimination, though its pages are not loaded down with learned footnotes and have not been multiplied by appendices and fruitless discussions of obscure points. It is a great pity that the unfinished study on Dante, the embodiment and culminating point of mediaevalism, could not be included and that other projected ones on Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide had never taken shape.

A short biographical sketch and an appreciative discussion of the author's career as scholar and teacher by Professor Lounsbury, introduce the *Studies* to us, of which the first treats of the Mediaeval Feeling for Nature. Schiller in his *Naïve und Sentimentalische Dichtung* had called attention to the difference between the ancient and modern feeling for nature and partially analyzed this difference. Humboldt in the *Kosmos* and Friedländer in *Die Sittengeschichte der Römer* had followed out his suggestions and traced in general outline the history of this sentiment. Others in a fragmentary way have touched upon the question, but no one before Professor McLaughlin has treated this period so fully, enriched our knowledge so much and by happy comparisons made us appreciate so clearly and concretely the sentiment of mediaeval man for nature in all its phases. He reaches these interesting definite conclusions:

"That the northern poets described storm, winter, the ocean and kindred subjects, with

considerable force and fullness. In the cultivated literatures to the south natural description was mainly confined to the agreeable forms of beauty. . . . The exterior world was not made a subject of close observation, nor was its poetic availability realized as a setting for action, or as an interpreter of emotion."

The author has given a partial explanation of the difference of sentiment between the poets of the North and South, but not a full one. The feeling for nature of both northern and southern peoples was really an "animal sensation." The northern nations loved the fierce and the rugged because it appealed to their love of fight; it was but another phase of their Berserker nature. The feeling was that exultant feeling of defiance resulting from the mere physical resistance to storm and hardship. Christianity and the inheritance of Roman civilization had toned down the fierce heathen spirit of the southern nations. The sagas and epics of the north breathe this old heathen spirit, the epics and lyrics of France and Germany show the refining influences of Christianity and Roman culture.

We cannot help wondering that the Middle Ages, which in their literature and their life show so often weariness of the world, of its vanities and unsatisfying pleasures, should not have developed the "sentimental" love of nature (characteristic to such a remarkable degree of their eulogists and imitators, the Romantic poets), which Schiller says "is like the longing of a sick man for health." It seems strange that it should have been left to the unbelieving rationalistic Eighteenth Century to call forth into luxuriant growth, the dormant germ of that sentiment which is "so closely akin to religion." Yet the reason is not far to seek. The mediaeval weary heart and soul sought refuge in the church and monastic seclusion, in pious devotion and religious service, while to the Eighteenth Century there was no other resource but to flee to nature for peace and rest which the world did not give. And it is interesting to note that the restless, yearning search for the mystic "blue flower," the symbol of the restful harmony of nature, led so many German Romanticists back into the fold of the Mediaeval Church and its rest-giving beliefs.

The sentiment for nature today is calmer,

deeper, truer and more universal, due possibly to the development of aesthetic taste in general, "to a blind following of the poets," and also to the fact that, as in Rousseau's and Schiller's age, the jaded human soul goes to nature for the restoration of health and peace. But it is chiefly due, as the essayist correctly concludes, "to the growth of modern refinement and ethical sensitiveness," which makes man appreciate more and more our new physical symbols of human emotion, and realize that nature "enfolds him with love and beauty, it cries back to his passion and pain in winter and storm, from the solemn mountains it reminds him of himself, an unconquerable partner of its own eternity."

At the very outset of his second essay on Ulrich von Liechtenstein the author disarms criticism when he says wittily, "if defective eyesight makes a man fancy a burdock a rose bush, and if he tends and cherishes the absurd idealization—at least, the man has a sentiment for roses." Yet it is but justice to say that he has given a too-sympathetic and favorable estimate of Ulrich, of whom he makes an old German "Don Quixote." As the hero led a double life of love, one of prosaic fondness for wife and home, and the other of extravagant devotion to his lady love and knight errantry, so it stands with his real life and his poetical life. History gives us the one picture of a heavily built, strong and brave soldier, an unscrupulous, violent partisan and a cunning, self-seeking politician. His *Frauentienst* gives us the very reverse. Even his ingenuous confessions bear testimony to his shrewdness, for some of the most affecting incidents have been borrowed or else highly colored by like incidents taken from other sources. Yet Ulrich does have a "sentiment for roses" and has unrolled a poetically true picture of the chivalrous *Minnedienst*, the controlling sentiment in the lives of the knightly class. The study is a mere narrative sketch, full of interesting digressions and smaller studies by the way, unpretentious, yet written in a charming, simple style and containing choice bits of poetical translation from the original. One of the chief charms of the book is the style, anything but showy and flashy, and yet rising in passages to great power and beauty. With all

its simplicity and directness the style is poetical, rich in sentiment and feeling, interesting, fervent and spirited throughout.

The interspersed translations of some real gems of mediaeval poetry are exquisite. English translations of the mediaeval German epic poetry, with their jingling metres, their many faults of rhetoric, style and translation, are anything but successful, generally destroying the chief beauty of the originals, namely their powerful simplicity. Few have attempted the lyrics for they have realized the difficulty of the task. Bayard Taylor's translations in his *Studies* are richer and more sensuous, less rigid in style and form, but he has allowed himself many liberties with the text of the originals. Professor McLaughlin's translations of unusually well-chosen passages are as graceful and delicate as Taylor's and are true translations, translations of word, of music, of thought and of spirit.

Apart from such translations and side lights thrown upon the "misty background of the Middle Ages," which make the essay on Neidhart von Reuenthal so readable, there is an additional interest in the fact that it is the only study in English of this Peasants' Poet and it is fully the peer of any discussion in German of this same subject. Professor McLaughlin was undoubtedly right in his estimate of Neidhart as a poet and of his rank in society and personal character. He was a court poet, living amongst the peasants to some extent, but using the materials gathered there chiefly for the diversion of his courtly audiences, who were delighted with his freshness and verve, but in his old age relapsing into conventionality, harping ever on the worn out themes of his earlier successful songs. It would seem, however, that the episode of Vriðerune's mirror which is so oft a recurring theme, fraught with regret and sadness, in Neidhart's poems, and which Professor McLaughlin has so ingeniously explained, has a simpler and hence more probable explanation in the theory advanced by Keinz in the *Proceedings of the Munich Academy* (1888 Vol. ii, 309 ff.).

This study on Neidhart as well as the succeeding one, entitled Meier Helmbrecht, are interesting in themselves, but especially so to the student of manners and customs and of

social institutions. The following study on "Childhood" is of more general human interest. The limitations of a review prevent a detailed presentation of its many interesting facts and discussions. It is a pity that the author of the *Studies* was obliged in it to omit a proposed detailed comparison of Longfellow's *Golden Legend* and *Der arme Heinrich*. Nothing could bring out so clearly the difference between mediaeval and modern sentiment in many respects. Longfellow throughout consciously strives to get into the spirit of the period of his story, endeavors to strip off the six centuries of culture and advanced thought, though in vain. He feels the need of changing small details, of creating by extraneous pictures a background and an atmosphere for his legend in order to gain credence for it. Simple religious faith becomes mystic ecstasy; the maiden, who in Hartmann's story is earthy of this earth, flesh of our flesh, is transformed by the modern poet into an ethereal being of the Fra Angelico type, chiefly halo, golden harp and flowing cerulean robe. The miraculous cure, so natural a consequence of the premises of the mediaeval story, Longfellow feels constrained to explain rationally and so makes dull prose of one of its most poetical features. The *Golden Legend* is a charming poem, but its author did not possess the childlike faith characteristic of mediaevalism, and necessary to sustaining the poetic illusion of the simple story of the peasant girl and the prince. *Der arme Heinrich* is all that Professor McLaughlin claims for it, and it is painful and humiliating to read such childish criticisms of it as are to be found in Gostwick and Harrison's *History of German Literature*.

In these essays the author has run through almost the entire scale of human sentiment and feeling, in order in his last to strike the full deep note of man's noblest passion to which the hearts of all vibrate responsively. The story of Abelard and Heloise is not a new one, though the version here, drawn from the first sources, is probably new to most people. It is a brilliant piece of writing, in the best sense of that abused word, "brilliant." Analysis will not help to an appreciation; it ought simply to be read and enjoyed.

A word in regard to the exterior of the

*Studies* which have been put in an attractive, tasty binding, and neatly printed. The printing is unusually accurate, only one misprint having come to the reviewer's notice.

As we lay aside the book we are ready to echo the opinion of a critic who concluded his criticism of this work as follows:

"Not only do those who knew the author have cause for profoundly regretting the sudden ending of a literary career which opened with such unusual promise, but everybody, friend or stranger, must mourn the loss of one whose past work gave hope of such abundant fruition in the future."

GUSTAV GRUENER.

Yale University.

### SOME RECENT INVESTIGATIONS ON MODALITY.

*Perfective und Imperfective Actionsart im Germanischen*, von WILHELM STREITBERG. PBB. xv, 70 ff.

*Zur Frage über den Ursprung der perfectivierenden Function der Verbalpræfixe*. Nebst Einleitung über das Zusammenwirken des syntaktischen und phonetischen Factors. Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Magisterwürde, von CARL RECHA. Dorpat: 1893.

*Verba Perfectiva namentlich im Heliand*. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der germanischen Verbalkomposition, von RUDOLF WUSTMANN. Leipzig: 1894.

'MODALITY' (German 'Aktionsart') is the character or mode of action expressed by a verb, and is usually divided into two kinds, perfective, and imperfective.

"Perfective [a word coined with especial reference to peculiarities of the Slavic languages] we designate verbs the meaning of which implies the attaining of an end, referring either to the moment of the attainment (momentary perfectivity), or to the striving after an end up to the moment when it is reached (durative perfectivity)"

(cf. Wustmann, p. 1), imperfective those which do not imply the attaining of an end. Modality has nothing whatever to do with the relative time of action (Zeitstufe), which is expressed by tense. For example, in the sentences "*Ich erstieg den Berg*—I arrived at

the top of the mountain," and "*Die Kurse stiegen*—the stocks were rising," the action referred to takes place in the past, while the verb in the first case is perfective, in the second imperfective, and the modality of the verbs is not altered by changing the tense-form from preterite to present, perfect, or future. The difference of modality and relative time of action (first sharply defined by Tobler, KZ. xiv, 108-139) is very important and must be kept clearly in mind.

In the Slavo-Lettic dialects the different kinds of modality are so sharply defined that the underlying principle has been claimed as peculiar to that language-group. The existence of traces of such a distinction in the Germanic languages was first pointed out by Jakob Grimm (1824, Preface to his translation of Wuk Stephanowitsch's *Servian Grammar*). Later investigations (Bernhardt, Dorfeld, Pietsch) were almost exclusively confined to the prefix *ge-* and as a result of this isolation of *ge-* from the other verbal prefixes, its chief function, that of producing perfectivity, was overlooked. The first scholar to prove conclusively what Grimm had merely suggested, was Wilhelm Streitberg in his article on "Perfective und imperfective Actionsart im Germanischen" (PBB. xv, 70 ff.).

In Slavic we find the following categories of verbs, according to their modality (cf. Streitberg I, pp. 70-72):

1. Imperfective, or continuative verbs; *lěsti*, 'steigen,' 'be mounting';
2. Perfective, or resultative verbs; *vuzlěsti*, 'ersteigen,' 'ascend,' 'surmount,' 'arrive at the top of.' This class may be subdivided into:

a. momentary perfectives: *ersteigen*, 'arrive at the top of,'—Sl. *ubiti*, 'erschlagen,' 'slay';

b. durative perfectives: *besteigen*, 'ascend,'—Sl. *preberem*, 'ich lese durch,' 'I am reading through';

3. iterative verbs, both perfective and imperfective; not existing in the Germanic languages.

Graphically represented, 1 would be an infinite straight line; 2 a, a point; 2 b, a limited straight line; 3, a series of infinite straight lines, points, or limited straight lines respectively.